

# Department of State Announces Ownership Transfer of the Kirk and Short Building to the Biggs Museum of American Art

DOVER, DE— Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock announced today that the Department of State has transferred ownership of the Kirk and Short Building located at 15 and 21 The Green, Dover, Delaware to the Biggs Museum of the American Art.

*“We are excited about this move because it’s a much better use of the property given the historical significance of The Green and its national park status,” said **Secretary of State Jeff Bullock**. “It will allow the Biggs to grow and expand and become an even more important asset to Dover and Kent County, while also creating additional tourism and business opportunities in the downtown area. Our HCA employees who worked in the building will soon move to Richardson Hall at 29 North State St, another historic building in disrepair that will be better preserved in the years to come.”*

*“The transfer is a smart, cost-effective decision that will save Delawareans money and will ensure that the Building will realize its highest and best use as a cultural asset,” Bullock added.*

*“Our public-private partnership with the Biggs Museum of American Art is so beneficial to Delawareans,” said **Division of Historic and Cultural Affairs Director Tim Slavin**. “This next chapter further strengthens that partnership.”*

The Kirk and Short Building, formerly known as the Todd House

and the Kirk Printing Shop, was built in 1859 by Henry Todd, a prominent agriculturist who served as a state legislator and Town Commissioner of Dover. Both properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Dover Green Historic District as well as being part of the City of Dover Historic District.

*“The acquisition of #15/21 The Green is a game changing opportunity for the Biggs Museum of American Art,” said **Executive Director of the Biggs Museum Charlie Guerin**. “With the Museum’s strengths in art collections from the 18th and 19th Centuries, the acquisition of historic properties of that same period, adjacent to the Museum on the Historic Dover Green, offers unique ongoing programmatic potential for our visitors. It will allow the Museum to return these historic properties to direct cultural and historic use, and to join the First State Heritage Park, The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and the First State National Historical Park by expanding public interpretation and understanding of Delaware’s rich historic, cultural, political and artistic history. In the months to come, the Biggs Museum will be engaged in a Facilities Master Planning Process to evaluate #15/21 The Green, along with the existing Biggs facility to determine the best strategy to take advantage of this exciting acquisition.”*

The Kirk and Short Building was most recently the administrative home to the Delaware Historical & Cultural Affairs (HCA), a division of the Department of State. The Building served as office space for HCA as no public programming function was served from the building.

The Biggs Museum of American Art is a private not-for-profit art museum and has been operating adjacent to the Kirk and Short Building at its location at 406 Federal Street, Dover, DE since its founding in 1993. Under a trust agreement executed in 1989, the State of Delaware and the Biggs Museum

have been engaged in a successful public-private partnership.

HCA offices will move to state-owned property at Richardson Hall at 29 North State Street, Dover, DE 19901.

To learn more about the Biggs Museum of the Art, click [here](#).